THE NATION

AUGUST 26, 1961 . . 25c

The SOBLEN TRIAL

Kafka on Foley Square

Walter Schneir

USSR's Favorite American Novelist Surveys

RUSSIA'S SOCIAL ELITE

Mitchell Wilson

Mrs Charles O. Sherrod Library
EAST TENNESSEE STATE COLLEGE
JOHNSON CITY, TENNESSEE

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LETTERS

Wanted: Understanding

Dear Sirs: I found "The Militant Latin Campus," by Robert D. Barton, which appeared in your August 12 issue, to be one of the most commendable articles I have read recently. We Latin Americans love your people and your country; your own Declaration of Independence, and the spirit of your great leaders of the past, inspired our fathers to attain our liberties. What we resent is the lack of esteem for, and knowledge of, your neighbors south of the Rio Grande that has been displayed by your leaders of the more recent decades.

Brooklyn, N.Y. RENE MANANGON

No Answer

Dear Sirs: I wish to thank David Cort for his very complimentary references to my wit-warpers in his article on "The Crossword Addict" [*The Nation,* July 29]. Although his scholarly analysis is in the main impeccable, my mathematician-and-scientist friends insist that I voice a mild protest concerning Mr. Cort's thesis that "people do crosswords for the same reason they become mathematicians and scientists; they know in advance that there is an answer." While in the case of my puzzles there is a guaranteed answer, in the world of mathematics and science, this is very often not the case—on the contrary, many years of effort have been expended on problems where the chance of an answer is very slim indeed.

Takoma Park, Md. FRANK W. LEWIS

His Fair Share

Dear Sirs: I have recently written to President Kennedy as follows—

"I have lately read in a newpaper that the explosive power in our national arsenal, divided among the population of our country, would give each man, woman and child power equal to ten tons of TNT. When may this be delivered to me? I have a number of worthwhile community improvements that I should like to make in my home town and its environs.

"You may know that the citizens in and about the Los Angeles area are greatly bothered by fumes. One project I have in mind is to remove the mountains to the north, so that the wind could blow freely and thus blow these noxious fumes out of our district. . . . I have also thought about remedying those parts of our city which have become blighted. . . . My wife has said she would like to use her share to make a swimming pool. She doesn't realize that ten tons is much too much for that purpose, but she never was good at figures.

"Please, when may I have my explosives? . . ." HARMON M. GEHR

Minister, Troop Memorial

Pasadena, Calif. Universalist Church

Copies of "The CIA" Again Available

Acting solely on his own initiative, Congressman Abraham J. Multer (D., N.Y.) has inserted "The CIA" in its entirety into the *Congressional Record* of Aug. 8. The article is so long—in excess of 40,000 words—that the Congressman required special permission to make the insertion.

We are grateful to Congressman Multer for (a) making "The CIA" a part of the official record of the U.S. Government; (b) making it possible to satisfy thousands of orders for the article which we have been unable to fill.

As *Nation* readers know, we sold out two large printings of the issue. Now, however, orders can be filled if directed as follows:

Small orders: Address orders for one or more copies of the entire *Congressional Record* for Aug. 8 to the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C., enclosing 32c (in cash, or by check or money order made out to Superintendent of Documents; stamps are not acceptable) for each copy ordered.

1,000 copies or more: Address your request to the Hon. Abraham J. Multer, House Office Building, Washington, D.C., who will arrange for reprints of "The CIA," taken directly from the *Record,* at a very moderate price to cover printing and mailing costs.

The Nation is not in a position to fill any orders. Please address your orders as above.—EDITORS.

Catholic Libertarians

Dear Sirs: Alex Gottfried and Sue Davidson in their "New Right in Action" [*Nation,* July 29] restate the facts of life which most civil libertarians acknowledge today: that the academic community and our religious leaders have been foremost in meeting the challenge of the revivalism on the Right.

What is disturbing is not that John Birch idiots wax hotter and gain adherents, but that actually some segments of organized labor give them aid and comfort through their endorsements of such frauds as *Operation Abolition* and *Communism on the Map.* . . .

"New Right in Action," however, might lend the impression that Catholic editorialists and clergymen have again joined the extremist camp, as did so many of our co-religionists in the Father Coughlin era. Happily, this is not the case. . . . In Oklahoma City, as an instance,

(Continued on page 101)

In This Issue

EDITORIALS

89 ●

ARTICLES

91 ● The Soblen Trial
by WALTER SCHNEIR

95 ● Russia's Social Elite
by MITCHELL WILSON

100 ● Protecting Overseas Investors
by WILLIAM APPLEMAN WILLIAMS

BOOKS AND THE ARTS

102 ● In Search of America
by LOREN BARITZ

104 ● "An Indifferent Letter Writer"
by SIDNEY MONAS

106 ● Window on the New Hungary
by GEORGE A. LANYI

107 ● Harlem in London
by C. H. ROLPH

Crossword Puzzle (opp. 108)
by FRANK W. LEWIS

George G. Kirstein, Publisher
Carey McWilliams, Editor
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NEW YORK, SATURDAY, AUGUST 26, 1961
VOLUME 193, No. 5

THE NATION

EDITORIALS

The Still, Quiet Voice

Negotiations over the Berlin question are already in progress. The two sides are negotiating with border-closings, repressions, demonstrations, propaganda, military and economic threats and mobilizations. Unavoidably, this stage — a necessary prelude to a gathering in a large room with a large table and comfortable chairs — is a noisy one. There may be some shooting, but, if so, it will most likely be the shooting of obstreperous civilians by well-armed soldiers. Even this, however — should it occur — must not take our minds off the really crucial question of the moment, which is not Berlin, not Germany, but what the great powers are going to do about disarmament, and specifically what the United States is going to do.

This is front-page news, but of a curiously unexciting kind. It is somewhat like trying to write a sonnet while a dogfight is going on under the table. Disarmament has an air of unreality while the screams over Berlin fill the air. Nevertheless one of the most capable realists in the Kennedy Administration, John J. McCloy, former High Commissioner in Germany, former head of the Chase Manhattan Bank, and with the recent advantage of a family weekend with Premier Khrushchev, is spending his time on disarmament. Since Mr. McCloy is not in the habit of wasting his most precious asset, other Americans may well take their cue from him and, in particular, read S. 2180 (Disarmament Act for World Peace and Security), introduced in the Senate on June 29 by Senator Hubert Humphrey, and the identical H. R. 7936, introduced in the House on the same date by Representative Thomas E. Morgan of Pennsylvania. These bills provide for a United States Disarmament Agency for World Peace and Security to conduct research for disarmament-policy formulation, prepare for and direct U. S. participation in international negotiations in the disarmament field, disseminate public information regarding disarmament, and be responsible for the preparation and operation of international control systems that may in the future become part of U. S. disarmament activities. It will be headed by a director, a deputy director and assistant directors, all appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. There will be a staff of 250, many of them scholars and scientists, and the annual budget will not exceed $7 million, as compared with an arms budget which is rapidly approaching $50 billion a year. The ratio — about 1:7,000 — is certainly a modest one.

Except perhaps from ultra-rightists and ultra-nationalists, there appears to be no opposition to S. 2180 and H. R. 7936. These are Administration measures in which a long list of prominent Republicans, including General Eisenhower, Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., and Christian A. Herter, heartily concur. Whatever their motives, these men all agree that an agency of this type would be in the public interest.

This near-unanimity does not, however, insure the bills' passage. Overshadowed by the Berlin crisis, the House resolution could be crowded off the calendar. The ordinary citizen has little enough opportunity to make his voice heard in the name of reason and sanity. This is his chance to let his representatives in Congress know that he wants the United States to take the initiative in establishing a permanent agency to work for disarmament, after the shouting has died down.

'Cuba Is the Chicken'

"Cuba is the chicken that laid the golden egg," Che Guevara scornfully told the delegates at the Inter-American Economic Conference after the United States had pledged to dig up $20 billion in Western funds for Latin America in the next decade. Mixed aphorisms aside, Guevara was right, of course. But even if it took Cuba to awaken the Administration, the fact is that the New Frontier's brand of enlightened capitalism has seldom looked better than it did in Punta del Este.

The United States promised its southern neighbors everything that regional experts have argued for years was vitally necessary. As important as the money offered was President Kennedy's insistence—written into the final agreement—that the beneficiaries must undertake massive and long-needed social reforms to qualify. Almost equally important was the abandonment, by the United States, of its traditional opposition to stabilization schemes for commodities; we are now pledged to support any workable device that will assure the Latins steady earnings for their raw materials. Further, we have promised to promote industrialization; indeed, we

AUG 28 '61

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insisted upon national economic planning as a requisite for the maximum amount of aid.

All these conditions the Latins have accepted. On its face, the pledge of social reform taken by them means tax laws will be enforced against the rich as well as the poor; it means land reforms; it means less money for arms and more for schools, housing, hospitals. It means, in short, slow but real revolution. Question: will the Latin nations, on the one hand, and the United States on the other, keep the pledges they have so sincerely entered into? Latin finance ministers, seeking to put the Punta del Este agreements into practice, will confront venal and indifferent bureaucracies, not to speak of wealthy oligarchies whose notion of preparing for social revolutions is to open numbered accounts in Swiss banks. As for the United States, what will happen the next time a Latin government pleads that it must have a quick $100 million or the Communists will take over next week? Will the President be able to resist this blackmail long enough to question what has happened to the land and tax reforms that were promised —and promptly forgotten?

Time for Reflection

For several weeks, or even months, nothing has happened to exacerbate U.S.-Cuban relations. In the U.S.-to-Havana skyjackings, Castro's minions turned out to be innocent. Our Eastern Air Lines Electra ($2,500,000) has been exchanged for Castro's patrol boat ($40,000). At Punta del Este (see editorial above), the hope of the Kennedy Administration that Castro could be sent into a Latin American Coventry appears to have been a wishful dream.

The Cubans themselves, as well as their Soviet philanthropists, have been sending out feelers for a *rapprochement* between Havana and Washington. Our misadventures with Castro have given Khrushchev a chance to pull Uncle Sam's beard and to rush to the help of his little Cuban brother. But philanthropy costs money.

Where no one has gained, and all have lost, sober second thoughts may linger in the receptive mind. For Cuba there is only a vista of belt-tightening, which will become the more painful — and dangerous — as revolutionary fervor ebbs. The American hope that political ostracism could be imposed at some subsequent inter-American conference has been effectively destroyed by the opposition of Brazil, Mexico and Chile. The hijacking incidents have had one beneficial effect; they have shown the necessity for direct communication between the two governments.

But the Castro Cubans are Communists, Senator Smathers will scream. The truth is that while Castro's revolution is certainly rough on capitalists, how communistic it becomes depends chiefly on Washington. If we invoke the Trading with the Enemy Act and cut off the considerable amount of trade still existing, then the situation may indeed become irreversible. But if we make some amiable gestures, the chances are that Castro will be amenable to an improvement in relations.

What Castro would really like, of course, is to be cut in on the golden largesse of the Alliance for Progress. This is politically impossible at the moment; but, curiously, we are already committed to giving some small help to the erring Cuban brother, via the U.N. Cuba is receiving aid in its agricultural-improvement program through the U.N. Special Fund, in the amount of about $3 million over a five-year period. The U.N. experts going to Cuba will probably be Italians, allies of ours in NATO! The United States objected to the grant but, in accordance with our traditional policy on these fund operations, refrained from vetoing it. This forbearance may be a harbinger of better times.

The Lunatic Core

The President referred to the individuals who have been hijacking airplanes as members of the "lunatic fringe." The phrase contains some truth: the elder Bearden, who engineered the Los Angeles-El Paso piracy, had spent some time in an Arizona mental institution, while Albert Charles Cadon, the French Algerian who forced the Pan American airliner to land in Cuba, had been under observation twice in mental clinics. But both men had committed themselves voluntarily, which is quite a different matter from being certified as mentally incompetent. An objective appraisal of their aberrations, moreover, would not seem to bear out the theory that hijackers are *ipso facto* irrational. Most Americans, for example, would regard the anti-Castro Cubans who hijacked Cuban aircraft as exemplary patriots: it makes some difference whose aircraft is hijacked.

The lesson of these incidents, actually, is that violence, whether individual or governmental, no longer works in the higher reaches of a high-level technological society. A patrolman collaring a pickpocket in a bus can use force effectively. But if the bus is airborne, an entirely different situation confronts the law. An airliner is a peculiarly unsuitable shooting gallery. There are usually only two or three persons aboard who can fly it, and if they are killed or incapacitated, the chances of landing safely are practically nil. If the aircraft is pressurized and the skin is punctured by gunfire, the ship may be wrecked by a decompressive explosion. The airline executives and pilots who are dubious of proposals to arm the crews thus have ample support for their stand. Even the armed guards who are now assigned to some flights may be more of a menace than a safeguard.

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jumped at the conclusion that the two American aircraft had been hijacked by Castro agents and who promptly shouted for an invasion of Cuba. Of course, in their madness there was a method: there are votes in advocating violence, and Castro is today the great American scapegoat. But it would not pay off if the disciples of violence were not so numerous. In the nature of things, however, their cult is doomed — or we all are.

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The Shelter and the Shotgun

After years of frustration, civil defense is at last coming into its own. The newsprints and the radio blare forth the millions of lives that can allegedly be saved if every good American will fall to with concrete blocks and mortar to build himself a shelter. True, they can be saved only if Mr. Khrushchev obligingly salvos his missiles when the family is enjoying togetherness in its ranch house or split level; true, also, that the shelter will avail only against fallout and will be more of a mausoleum than a refuge if the bombs explode anywhere in the vicinity. Worst of all, the total megatonnage of explosives must be the modest one envisaged by the Civil Defense bureaucracy, rather than what Mr. Khrushchev may have in mind. What he has in mind, and sooner or later will have in his nuclear arsenal, may be enough to kill everybody in the United States.

These, however, are merely practical problems. Moral and theological questions also arise. In those areas where civil defense has been least neglected, the good citizens who have forehandedly built shelters have stocked them not only with canned goods, a Conelrad radio, flashlight, etc., but with firearms. A Texas hardware dealer is pictured in *Time* (August 18) with his family of six, four rifles and a .357 Magnum pistol. He points to the four-inch-thick wooden door. "This isn't to keep radiation out," the staunch householder warns, "it's to keep people out."

He may know his neighbors, but *The Nation* suspects that some of them will not intrude on him. The embattled burghers of Las Vegas, who are forming a 5,000-man militia to repel the bombed-out refugees from Los Angeles who, they expect, will descend on them "like a swarm of locusts," may also be unduly exercised. When neighbor shoots up neighbor and Las Vegas repels the Angelenos, whom it now welcomes to its gambling casinos and bordellos, many will be content to depart by radiation or whatever quicker means may be at hand.

THE SOBLEN TRIAL . . *by Walter Schneir*

WHEN Bartolomeo Vanzetti sat in the electric chair at Charleston Prison waiting for the State of Massachusetts to kill him, he spoke his last words to the assembled witnesses: "I wish to tell you that I am an innocent man. I never committed any crime, but sometimes some sin."

Leaving *sin* aside, the question still perplexing this observer, who attended every session of the recent espionage trial of Dr. Robert A. Soblen, is the exact nature of the *crime* for which the mortally ill sixty-year-old psychiatrist was sentenced, on August 7, to life imprisonment by Judge William B. Herlands.

Dr. Soblen (he spells his name with an "n" to differentiate it from that of his physician-wife) was picked up by the FBI on November 30, 1960, nearly four years after the arrest of his brother, Jack Soble, on similar charges. The Lithuanian-born physician pleaded not guilty to a charge of conspiring to obtain material relating to the national defense (during World War II and thereafter) for the USSR. He was the sole defendant in an indictment naming eighteen co-conspirators, including the late Lavrenti Beria.

The arrest was front-page news. Headlined *The New York Times:* "Brother of Soble Is Seized as a Wartime Soviet Spy; Psychiatrist Is Linked to Ring Headed by Beria—May Face Death." The story explained that the brothers "were involved in separate espionage rings that sought national defense secrets for transmission to the Soviet Union." *Time* magazine was more explicit, mentioning "secret documents of the World War II Office of Strategic Services," information on an "atomic-bomb project" and "photographs of the Sandia nuclear-weapons development center."

The defendant's brother, Jack Soble, also had faced the death pen-

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WALTER SCHNEIR, whose articles have appeared in various national magazines, is now collaborating with his wife on a book dealing in part with U.S. espionage trials of the 50s.

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alty when he was arrested, along with his wife Myra and a friend, Jacob Albam, on January 25, 1957. The three pleaded not guilty. Soon afterwards, Jack Soble suffered a mental breakdown and attempted suicide in his cell at Bronx County jail; subsequently, he spent some weeks in the psychiatric ward at Bellevue. On April 10, 1957, he and his co-defendants were permitted to plead guilty to a single count of the five-count indictment. Six months later, they were sentenced: seven and a half years for Jack Soble, five and a half years each for Mrs. Soble and Jacob Albam.

A rapid-fire succession of events followed: the public uncovering of FBI undercover agent Boris Morros; indictments for wartime espionage of a number of Americans now living abroad (all publicly denied any wrongdoing); a series of *Journal-American* articles by Jack Soble as told to Jack Lotto ("How I Spied on U.S. for the Reds"); various Congressional expressions of interest in the case; a second and bizarre suicide attempt by Soble; the conviction—subsequently reversed — of Mark Zborowski for perjury, with Soble as the principal prosecution witness; a book by Boris Morros, *My Ten Years as a Counterspy* (later made into a movie with Ernest Borgnine); and a television show touching on the cases *(The Spy Next Door).*

Unnoticed in all this tumult was the fact that none of the many allegations appearing in the press had ever been exposed to the rules of evidence in a court of law; Soble's guilty plea had precluded the necessity for any show of proof by the government. The trial of Dr. Robert A. Soblen appeared to offer the first real possibility for the public to learn something of the actual crimes committed not only by Dr. Soblen, but also by his brother, Jack Soble.

THE CASE of the *United States vs. Dr. Robert A. Soblen,* an alleged principal in what one newspaper called "the biggest spy ring smashed in this country since atom spies Julius and Ethel Rosenberg went to the chair," opened in New York City at the Federal Courthouse at Foley Square on June 19; ironically, the date was the eighth anniversary of the electrocution of the Rosenbergs.

The defendant, suffering from an advanced case of lymphatic leukemia, had appealed to the court three weeks before for a speedy trial to "vindicate" himself and clear his name; by the time the trial opened, however, his condition had apparently worsened and his attorneys moved, unsuccessfully, for a delay. A tall, bald, somewhat gaunt-faced man with sallow complexion and deeply set eyes, Dr. Soblen sat or lay during the trial in a special contour chair and frequently appeared to drowse, possibly from the effects of heavy doses of various drugs.

The government's first and star witness was the defendant's brother, Jack, who at fifty-eight closely resembles Dr. Soblen. Jack recounted the brothers' political activities during the twenties and early thirties in Lithuania (their father had been a wealthy bristle merchant and "violent anti-Communist") and Germany, where they joined the Communist Party, supporting and speaking in behalf of its "Trotskyite wing." Jack said that the party subsequently expelled him and that later, seeking reinstatement, he was persuaded to supply information about the activities of the various Trotskyite groups with whom he worked.

WATCHING Soble gesturing to judge and jury, intoning the names of Bucharin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Mensheviks, Trotskyites, hearing his allusions to old revolutionary battles and lost causes (Robert had been a physician for the Loyalists), one looked at the well-dressed jury, aseptically selected by a filtration system guaranteed to remove every political impurity; one looked at the attentive, pink-cheeked Judge Herlands with the prim demeanor of a Presbyterian elder ("Spell that name, spell it please!"), and one wondered what on earth they made of it all.

The conspiracy charged in the indictment, Jack Soble testified, was entered into in late 1939 or early 1940 while he was living in Moscow, where he had been working as a journalist on an anti-Fascist German newspaper. Lavrenti Beria sent for him and proposed that both Jack and his brother, Robert, go abroad to gather information for the Soviet Union, taking many members of their family with them. The details of the proposition were somewhat surprisingly vague: Beria had suggested no particular country nor specified the type of information desired.

The witness recounted that he thereupon went to Lithuania, where brother Robert told him that he had been approached by some Russians with a similar proposal. After helping to forge passports for members of the family and obtaining Haitian visas, Jack set out with Robert and about fifteen other relatives for the United States via Vladivostok.

THE arrival of Jack and Robert in San Francisco on October 20, 1941, constitutes the first (and only required) overt act in the government's conspiracy case against Dr. Soblen. According to the laws of conspiracy, having "established" a conspiracy and one overt act, the government now needed only to prove that the material the defendant sought related to the national defense.

Virtually penniless, Jack Soble went to work for another brother in Canada; later, in early 1942, he made contact with the Soviet Trading Organization (AMTORG) on a business matter. While haggling over prices with the chief of the bristles section of AMTORG, Jack was informed that someone wanted to see him; subsequently he was visited by one Zubilin, a Soviet official, who reminded him of his agreement with Beria and asked him to move from Canada to New York to get "any information you can."

Jack, who had never been trained in any intelligence work, was unenthusiastic. Nevertheless, he testified, he moved his family to New York and held frequent meetings with Zubilin, who kept promising him bristles and also aid in finding a job. During this period, Jack said, he introduced Robert to Zubilin and later was told by Mrs. Zubilin that she was Robert's superior "and she gave him [Robert] a group . . . of women who work in the OSS."

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Up to this time, Jack had not done any work for the Russians and, by early 1943, Zubilin became "disgusted" and turned Jack over to another contact who informed him that the things he would do "concerns Trotsky groups."

UNDER cross-examination by Joseph Brill, defense counsel, Jack Soble was alternately wily, defensive, hostile, condescending and suspicious, frequently jumping up, shouting, refusing to heed the judge's admonitions to cut short his rambling responses to questions. For nearly three years prior to the trial he had been under psychiatric care, receiving twenty shock treatments in 1958 and 1959 at the Acute Treatment Unit of the Medical Center for Federal Prisoners in Springfield, Mo.

During the entire period since his guilty plea, he had appeared before numerous grand juries and been interviewed scores of times by the FBI. Armed with some of this material (available under the *Jencks* ruling), defense attorney Brill sought a specific description of the witness' espionage activities. The answer proved hard to come by.

Asked, for example, if he had done the things noted in the *Journal-American* articles, the witness firmly denied both their authorship and accuracy. He said that he had agreed to publication of the articles (later reprinted by the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee) sight unseen, because of a desperate need for money; one-third of the sale price had gone to his attorney, a third to Lotto and a third to himself.

Under Brill's prodding, Soble presented a picture of Boris Morros as a splendidly successful *agent provocateur* who, while working for the FBI and pretending to be a Soviet agent, threatened him with exposure to the FBI if he did not produce written material for the Russians. The material the frightened Soble made up was then duly turned over to the FBI by its undercover agent.

Brill: What were the reports you gave to Boris Morros for transmittal to the Russians?

Soble: Lies and wrong things about what I did in this country. . . .

Brill: These reports which you told the grand jurors about, did you explain to the Grand Jury that these were all lies?

Soble: This I don't recall.

When, finally, Brill succeeded in pinning the elusive witness down on what he *had* done, the result was unexpected:

Brill: Mr. Soble . . . what did you do with respect to our national defense; what did you do; what information did you receive and . . . transmit?

Soble: If national defense consists of atomic bombs and H-bombs and many modern weapons which this country created, you are very far from the truth, because I had never anything to do with these things. . . .

Brill: You don't consider that national defense, what you did, am I correct?

Soble: Work among the Trotskyites, Mensheviks and work among Zionists. . . . I don't consider it as national defense of this country. . . . I am very happy that I did not steal any national defense things from this country. . . . This is what I said to the investigators. . . .

Brill: In other words, you feel that you are serving a prison sentence without being guilty of crimes, don't you . . . that your own attorney advised you not to plead guilty and against his advice you pleaded guilty? . . .

Soble: What do you mean I did not commit any crime in this country? What are you trying to do? I committed a crime because I lied to this government. I came on the visa, having already falsified my questionnaire and not having answered if I was a Communist or not; what do you call lies and what do you call truth, Mr. Brill? . . . Do you understand that I committed crimes? . . . That is why I am shouting. I am glad that I am serving even this term because it showed me the way to truth.

FLOYD CLEVELAND MILLER, the government's next witness, is a quiet-spoken, slight man in his forties who had been named in the indictment as a co-conspirator. A free-lance writer, Miller testified that he joined the American Communist Party in 1936; then, after three months, was recruited by the Communist International to do opposition work among Trotskyites.

"The first assignment was to cover a wiretap on the head of the Trotskyite party, a man by the name of Cannon. . . ." In 1944, Miller said, he met Jack Soble (whom he knew as Sam) and discussed with him a book on Stalin by Trotsky which Trotsky's widow was having trouble getting published. The next year, Sam told him to find a newspaper job in Europe, presumably as a "cover for espionage." Sam then said he was going away and introduced Miller to Robert Soblen ("Sam's cousin"). Miller testified that he met Soblen about half a dozen times over a six-month period and sometimes gave him written reports on his unsuccessful efforts to find a job abroad.

Miller said that he was first shown a photo of Dr. Soblen by the FBI ten years ago. He had told the FBI in 1954 that his own work dealt only with Trotskyite activities and was never directed against the United States Government. He reiterated this assertion at the trial.

Asked what he had reported to Dr. Soblen, Miller said: "I would report that I had no contacts. . . . The fact is that there was nothing really to report in this matter." Except for the few 1945 meetings testified to, Miller said he never again saw Dr. Soblen until the trial.

Also named as a co-conspirator, but not indicted, was the government's third witness, Johanna Koenen Beker. Daughter of a former Com-

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munist member of the *Reichstag* who is now said to be an East German official, Mrs. Beker, forty-nine, has been a secretary for a New York law firm for nearly twenty years.

In 1943, she said, she became acquainted with Dr. Soblen through Mrs. Zubilin. At his request, she met with two German refugees (Dr. Horst Baerensprung and Dr. Hans Hirschfeld) and received reports on German political matters, for which she paid them. The reports were then allegedly turned over to Dr. Soblen. At the time, Drs. Baerensprung and Hirschfeld were employed as part-time consultants in the Biographical Records section of OSS.

According to Mrs. Beker's direct testimony, "Hans Hirschfeld's reports were mainly from his office"; regarding Dr. Hirschfeld, she also testified that in June, 1945, "the last paragraph in his last two or three reports stated that he had gained knowledge . . . that the United States was working on some important military project [in the Northwest] and making great progress with it and this would decide the end of the war considerably. . . ."

Mrs. Beker, it developed on cross-examination, had been interviewed by the FBI at least twenty-seven times since early 1952. She had previously told the FBI that much of the material she received concerned the possibility of joint action between the German Social Democrats and the Communists after the war. (Both of the German refugees were Social Democrats.) In May, 1957, she had told the FBI that her activities were entirely "political."

> *Brill:* Mrs. Beker, is it a fair statement to state that whatever materials you received from Baerensprung related to the German political organization in New York and whatever materials you received from Hirschfeld was in connection with biographies of German individuals residing in New York?
>
> *Beker:* Primarily. . . .
>
> *Brill:* And is it a fair statement to say that whatever materials you received never bore any identifying mark of an agency of the United States Government?
>
> *Beker:* Yes.

As Mrs. Beker left the stand, the government's case, for all practical purposes, was complete, with the exception of a number of witnesses called to give brief technical proof on various matters. One wondered why the dead Dr. Baerensprung had been named as a co-conspirator, but not the living Dr. Hirschfeld; and also why the government had failed to call Hirschfeld as a witness. Also unexplained, as the case ended, was Mrs. Beker's testimony that she was "anti-Communist" at the time she was allegedly obtaining reports for Dr. Soblen.

Earlier, the defense had indicated that Dr. Soblen would take the stand. After nearly four weeks of trial, with the defendant apparently considerably weakened physically, the defense rested without calling him, or any other witnesses, and asserted that the government had not presented a *prima facie* case.

Having recently participated in a New York State Supreme Court jury which deliberated for six hours on the liability suit of a lady who fell off a carrousel, I was somewhat taken aback when the Soblen jury, faced with a capital offense, was able to bring in its guilty verdict in approximately one hour and ten minutes. Over Mr. Brill's pleas that Dr. Soblen has less than a year to live and is in "excrutiating pain," Judge Herlands revoked bail and remanded the defendant to prison, remarking that before sentencing he would look at any "supplementary FBI report."

The meaning of this phrase seemed to have been clarified several days later by a *New York Times* headline: "Soblen Is Warned to Name Red Spies; Soviet Agent Is Told Severity of Term Depends on Him." Judge Herlands made clear the alternatives facing Dr. Soblen:

> . . . A conspiracy to commit espionage is analogous to a conspiracy to commit mass murder. . . . I want defense counsel and the defendant to know that I shall impose punishment consonant with that conception of the gravity of the offense.

ON AUGUST 7, the date set for sentencing, Brill requested a delay on the grounds of newly discovered evidence. Two former OSS men, H. Stuart Hughes, a Harvard professor of history, and Herbert Marcuse, a Brandeis professor of philosophy, had come forward to say that neither Baerensprung nor Hirschfeld had worked in a confidential capacity. Prof. Hughes emphasized that even as an OSS lieutenant colonel, he himself had known nothing of the atom-bomb project, so he doubted that Hirschfeld could possibly have gained such knowledge. Both professors offered to testify at any new trial and provided Brill with Dr. Hirschfeld's address in West Germany. (Dr. Hirschfeld, long a Social Democrat, served in the administration of former Mayor Reuter of West Berlin, and has established a reputation as an anti-Communist journalist.)

ASSERTING that a new trial could be requested after sentencing, Judge Herlands ruled that the sentencing go forward. What followed was widely reported in the press: Dr. Soblen's speech to the court ("I am completely innocent—at no time did I do anything relating to national defense or possibly injurious to the United States") with a plea to be allowed to spend his short remaining time with his family; Judge Herland's life sentence ("A spy is a spy, no matter what his health may be"); the defendant's collapse; his sister's anguished shrieks.

Unnoticed by most, however, was a curious moment during Assistant United States Attorney Richard Casey's address to the court. Speaking for the government, Casey told Judge Herlands that the defendant had been engaged in espionage "almost all his adult life." Here was no dupe, said Casey, asserting that Soblen had been arrested in 1921 for causing a riot at a May Day celebration in Lithuania. What a May Day riot in Lithuania forty years ago had to do with violating the U.S. Espionage Act was not explained.

Robert Soblen, who was already twenty years old in 1921, stared incredulously at Richard Casey, who was born in 1933 or 1934. Clearly, the gulf between them was not alone a matter of age; they spoke, it seemed, different languages. At any rate, for the first time, a look of abject hopelessness came over Dr. Soblen's face; then he covered his eyes with his hands and sat shaking his head slowly from side to side.

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RUSSIA'S SOCIAL ELITE . . *by Mitchell Wilson*

IN A WAY, my passport is unique. Customs officers glance with dead-pan boredom at the green and gold cover, but poise evaporates beyond the first page. No wonder. Out of ten pages stamped with arrivals, departures and visa extensions, seven bear the hammer-and-sickle emblem of the Soviet Union. Yet I am neither diplomat, international correspondent nor secret agent. I am, I suppose, simply a commuter.

To be a commuter to London or Paris these days requires no explanation; it has become standard operating chic. To have become a commuter to Moscow, one must state a reason. Mine was simple. Others may admire Soviet ballet or Soviet science. What I admired about the Soviet Union was that the Soviet Union admired me. Russians like my novels. To me, this was irresistible.

About eight years ago, when I was living on Martha's Vineyard, word trickled in that a novel of mine — *Live With Lightning* — was popular in Russia.

Now, eight years ago, Senator McCarthy was riding high, but my neighbors saw nothing sinister in my Russian success. They were pleased, too — at the prospect of Moscow gold in royalties.

The royalties did not come. I sent a letter asking for money. There was no answer. A year went by. Then came a cable from Moscow; another novel of mine, *My Brother, My Enemy*, was about to be translated. I was asked to write an article: "How I came to write *My Brother, My Enemy*."

I wired back: *Delighted to write article if paid for (1) article; (2) serial, and (3) previous novel. Regards.*

Stunned silence fell on Moscow. For weeks, nothing. Finally, the Martha's Vineyard National Bank telephoned excitedly: "The Russians have just deposited $6,253 to your account!"

That day, McCarthy was playing havoc with the Midwest, but all the time, I, on the little island five miles offshore, was really the boy with the Moscow gold. Poor man, he never knew.

SINCE THEN, Moscow and I have been doing a fairly regular business. Over the years, it has come to about $15,000 and I only wish it were more.

Three years ago, Ken McCormick of Doubleday, intrigued by a chance remark of John Gunther's, decided that I was the man to do a novel about the legendary Soviet scientists at work and at play. I had been a research physicist myself for ten years, he argued; the Russians knew me and would cooperate. All I had to do was to go there, soak it all up and come back with a slice of life. I couldn't have been less interested. All that spring, Ken was insistent, but so was I. Then the Russians inadvertently played into Doubleday's hands by inviting me to Moscow for two weeks as part of a cultural delegation. More interested in the stopovers I would have in London and Paris, I accepted.

I landed in Moscow in October, 1957, and the experience was explosive. It was a place that could drive a foreigner mad if he were kept on the tourist surface, but Ken had been right: I had more invitations from Soviet scientists and writers than I could have accepted in a year. Instead of being on the moon, or in funny-funny land, I found myself in a country full of vital people living lives of fascinating complexity. My previous attitude of flippancy toward the whole thing evaporated. I made an official request to the Union of Writers. I wanted to write a novel; would it be possible to return some later time on my own, to go where I wanted and see whom I pleased without restraint, and to work in some physics research lab that wasn't covered by security restrictions? Two days before I left Moscow permission was granted. Six months later I was back there, speaking broken but working Russian, prepared to stay as long as necessary for a story, and with a brush-up of several weeks at M.I.T., in Bruno Rossi's cosmic-ray labs. Cosmic-ray research is security-free in both countries, and besides that had once been my field.

I had no plans for interviews — they are useless to a novelist. All I wanted to do was to experience how it felt to live and work in the Soviet Union.

Because of my books, I had easy access everywhere. To intensify my sense of Russian-ness, I saw other foreigners very rarely, I lived in a non-Intourist hotel and I had no interpreter. I came and went as I pleased. After some delay, I was unofficially assigned to a research group of the Lebedev Institute of Physics of the Academy of Science.

As much as possible I lived on rubles that I earned there from royalties and non-political articles which I wrote for Moscow magazines. I made no sight-seeing trips; but personal invitations from Soviet friends took me to Leningrad any number of times; to Yalta; to Dubna (the atomic research center); and to Armenia, where there are important stations for astrophysics and cosmic-ray research.

The people I knew were of the same strata as those I know in the West: writers, scientists, theatre people. I made personal friends and personal enemies, and not a day passed that I didn't make a dozen mistakes. I took part in Moscow gossip and was also the subject of it. Once I tried to count up the number of Soviet homes I had visited on a purely social basis; I got to forty, then lost track. I had and still have my own ruble bank account — No. 24369 at State Bank Branch 2587/0265 at 2/10 Okhotny Ryad.

THE BANK account is significant because something as concrete as money is as good a starting point as any to understand the similar-

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MITCHELL WILSON'S latest novel, Meeting at a Far Meridian, *was published simultaneously in New York (Doubleday), London and Moscow.*

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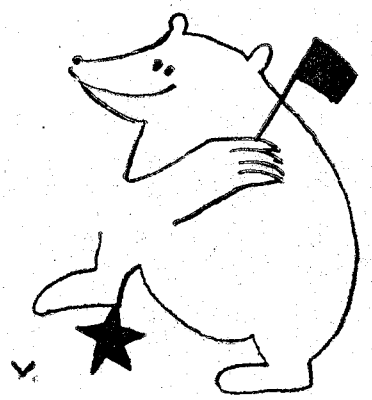
ities and differences between what it feels like to live in the Soviet society and ours. Larger aspects are far too complex for generalization. For example, that great political convulsion of Soviet history — the Stalin era — was five years past when I first arrived, and the Russians who had lived through it were still trying to sort out for themselves what it had meant. Stories I was told made it clear that everything we had read in the 30s and the 40s — the good, the bad, the brutal, the heroic, the vile, the idealistic — by the most ardent apologists and by the most unforgiving critics — must all have been equally true.

To one young scientist who had come to maturity during that time, I said that I was trying to find the truth which must lay somewhere between the assertions that life there had been (1) a prison (2) a paradise. He put down the fruit he had been peeling and said: "My God, how can I make you understand; it was both!"

A Moscow editor with whom I had gone swimming, rolled over on the river bank and said to me: "Look, make a complete chemical analysis of *Narzan* or any mineral water — so much of this salt, so much of that, all to the fifth decimal place, you will still be unable to reconstruct it. It was that way with us. Eighty per cent of what your most antagonistic jornalists wrote about us during that time was absolutely true. Yet they still left out the essential truth of the way it seemed to us and was. I know, I was reading your press even while I *lived* through it! We are what we are today neither because of, nor in spite of, that time; but *because* of what was great in it and *in spite* of what was terrible. You cannot sort it out."

The only other large statement that is safe to make is that after almost fifty years of existence, the Soviet Union — along with England, Switzerland and Scandinavia — is one of the oldest political entities in Europe; and by now its citizens appear to live within its framework and take it for granted just as we do ours. An American who loses his job, or drops a million dollars in Wall Street, doesn't rush out crying: "Down with capitalism!" Neither does the Soviet citizen colliding with disaster want to yell: "Down with Soviet power!" Instead, he takes what happens as part of the hazards of life and hopes that tomorrow he will be luckier.

NO, instead of the large generalization, money makes the better point of departure. Besides, the first thing I myself had to learn was about Soviet money — first the conflicting rates of exchange, then the comparison between Soviet prices and ours;



and at last, the far more complicated matter of what money means to the Soviet citizen.

Before going to Moscow, I had the impression that one would be constantly aware of state ownership at every moment, particularly on payday. I received no salary for my work at the laboratory; actually, I was more an observer than anything else. However, I did receive payment for the articles I wrote. The magazines are under the jurisdiction of the Union of Writers, which in turn is under the Ministry of Culture, but my own dealings always gave me the feeling that I was doing business on a personal basis with the particular editor involved.

My pieces, of course, were politically innocuous. If they had been otherwise, the editor — like most American editors, say, who had been offered a pro-Communist piece — would have reached for a rejection slip; but it was his responsibility to request the piece, to accept what was produced or to reject it. Magazines compete for writers and for readers. What one magazine turns down, another may gladly accept. These differences are purely on the editorial level, and so when I received my payment (incidentally not by check, but in envelopes full of cash), I was dealing only with the editor. Somewhere far above him was the Ministry, and above the Minister was the Kremlin, but within the confines of the Soviet society, the state is either too far above or too all-pervading to be immediately perceived. Money from the state turns out to feel no different than money from a private corporation.

SOVIET MONEY is different from American money, for one thing, because of what you can buy with it. My Soviet friends were spending their money on food, clothing, liquor, automobiles, television sets, theatre tickets, tennis rackets, sporting rifles, fishing gear, fur coats, furniture and cameras (some of these items were in easy supply, some were not). But they were *not* spending it on stocks and bonds, on insurance, on private school and college tuitions for their children, on private homes whose value might appreciate with time. In the Soviet Union, money cannot be put to work, and earns nothing besides the semiannual interest which the state banks pay on savings accounts, or which the government pays on trust funds left for the heirs of a deceased man who had the cash to leave. And even these trust funds terminate after fifteen years on the theory that by that time the heirs will have become self-sufficient. In the Soviet Union, money is only for exchange for articles for consumption. To me, a wad of rubles in my pocket felt only as if I had a load of blue stamps redeemable at any neighborhood store.

Again, Soviet money is different from American money because the social position of a Soviet citizen is not the result of the size of his income, but rather the reverse: his income depends on who he is, what he does, and how well he does it by their standards. Income itself is only one of the rewards which the state offers. The people I knew were either very well-to-do or rich; (and rich is a word which Russians themselves use in referring to others). Contrary to popular belief in the West, it is

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not the professional political people who receive the highest incomes at the moment, but those in the arts and sciences. Even managerial experts do not rate as high financially.

At all the important Soviet government receptions, the Soviet guest list usually includes mainly high ministerial people, writers and scientists — the writers being either officers of the Union of Soviet Writers or those who at least have received the recognition of being an Honored Artist; the scientists, those who have achieved some rank in the Academy. In terms of social prestige and relative income, the people of talent occupy roughly the same position as outstanding industrialists do in the West.

Nevertheless, an Academician once said to me: "I sometimes get the impression that there is more contact in the West between your writers and scientists and your ruling class than there is here."

AT first, I got bogged down in trying to discover from him what he meant by our "ruling class" beyond the nebulous Soviet conception of a group of big industrialists, each of whom, because of his wealth, had direct influence on Washington policy. It turned out that my friend had based his statement on the American fiction he had read. Our people of talent certainly *do* number businessmen among their friends, but generally the businessman's income is far higher than his creative friend's. In Moscow, as far as I could see there appeared to be — apart from command appearances at official government receptions — a rather sharp social cleavage between the people of talent, however rich, and the people of ministerial rank. They have different dacha colonies in the summer; they frequent different resorts; they do not seem to attend one another's private social gatherings.

The people of talent, however — and this is a recent development — mix with one another across the lines of specialization far more than we do in New York. In American terms, intellectual Moscow consists of a small Hollywood, a small Broadway, a large Institute of Advanced Study at Princeton, a Rockefeller Institute, a Brookhaven, roughly the same number of musical people, and all of them mixed together.

This was not always the case. In the 1930s and 40s, professional segregation was the rule. Building materials were scarce, housing appallingly inadequate, and the entire problem was dumped into the laps of the unions. Now pressures have eased. Dacha colonies are mixed. Whoever has money enough can buy a cottage and grounds in a cooperative, with the one restriction that he can sell it only to the cooperative for what he paid. Union-owned resorts exchange blocks of rooms with other unions. In Yalta, there is a new magnificent Writers' House of Rest that makes the local Intourist hotel look like a slum. Not only were there writers there, but I met the composer of some of the most popular Soviet dance tunes. With the pale blue of the Black Sea below our balcony, he played his entire repertory for me, tying the songs together with the exact Russian equivalent of "And then I wrote. . . ." This past summer, a cosmic-ray physicist with whom I was doing some work was looking forward to spending his vacation at a Musicians' Rest House near Riga.

THESE people all have large incomes by Soviet standards, and while recently there has been a new set of regulations which will diminish the spread between theirs and the average, the effect will not be very great.

How much money does a rich Russian earn? Before going to Moscow, I had heard stories of great wealth, of magnificent apartments, luxurious dachas, limousines, all side by side with the overcrowded tenements of the average Muscovite. By American standards, this is far from the truth. An American writer for popular, mass-circulation magazines like *Life* or the *Saturday Evening Post* is paid far more than a Soviet author by a Soviet magazine of equivalent standing. For example, $2,000 for an article in a popular American magazine is far from exceptional. The most widely read Moscow magazines pay the most outstanding Soviet writers the equivalent of $350 for a "list"— about twenty-four typed pages.

Again, there are the stories of the millionaire novelists whose works sell in numbers that are staggering to the Westerner. These stories are not true when translated directly into dollars. The Soviet royalty system is very different from ours in the West. In the first place, the basic rate paid for each unit of 50,000 copies sold is determined by the length of the manuscript; and when novels sell over 100,000 copies, the royalty rate *falls*. For poetry, science, learned monographs and all other books which cannot expect this so-called "mass" sale, the same royalty rate is paid on the basis of units of 15,000 copies. For this reason, a Soviet poet or a scholarly writer can make as much money as a novelist.

Let's take the case of a very popular author. His novel is first published in a magazine as a serial. It is then published in book form and sells 200,000 copies. For all this, he takes the equivalent of some $17,000. An American author having an equivalent acceptance would have earned about $120,000 at the most conservative calculation. Mosfilm pays Soviet authors $1,000 for screen rights and about $5,000 for the scenario. American payments would average several times these amounts.

The Soviet scientist, too, does not receive any fantastic income when it is translated directly into dollars. An Academician receives in stipends from the Academy, from professorships at the university and other sources, something between $20,000 to $40,000 a year (this includes a life pension). To a Western scholar, of course, the sum is impressive; to a U.S. industrialist—the Soviet Academician's real social equivalent— it is peanuts. But the point is that in the Soviet society, *nobody* earns more.

THESE, then, are the rich of the Soviet society. How do they live? By American standards, in modest comfort. The most luxurious apartment I visited in Moscow—that of a world-famous composer—could be duplicated a thousand times on Central Park West in New York.

Before I had seen too many Moscow apartments, I was taken to dinner at the apartment of an extremely

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rich woman—rich both by her own earnings and by inheritance. She had four large rooms—the largest being the dining room. The furniture was massive, comfortable and in unobtrusive Russian taste. From her tenth-story windows, there was a magnificent view of Moscow. In the booklined study, which was also her bedroom, there were Russian wall carpets over the daybed. We sat eating and talking until three in the morning, when we got to swapping ghost stories. I felt so completely at home that I had to keep reminding myself that this was Moscow; I could have been any place in Chelsea or Brooklyn Heights. On the way home, I mentioned to the friend who was walking with me that Valentina Petrovna had a very pleasant apartment. He shook his head and sighed: "A palace!" he said. "A *real* palace!"

A writer of better than medium success also had four rooms in a building that dated from Napoleonic times. Each room, though, was only about ten feet square. Six of us sat around a dining table absolutely crammed, but all about us everything was arranged with yachtsman-like order. My host needed to stretch no more than a hand to pick out a volume from an encyclopedia to settle an argument, or to pick up any one of six German cameras to describe his hobby.

The most outstanding scientists who had been given privileged quarters at the time of greatest congestion, find themselves living in quarters more cramped than their assistants, who now have apartments in the newer houses. At Kapitza's Institute for Physical Problems, one of the most famous in the world, the senior staff members were given apartments on the grounds in a specially built row of attached houses: two rooms on the ground floor, two above. Their American counterparts —who are far from being the most affluent members of American society—live in big, sprawling homes in Cambridge and Princeton. The director of another research institute, which is housed in a former palace—an urbane, highly civilized man, both an Academician and a Nobel Laureate—lives in three small rooms in one corner of the building, with an electric refrigerator in the corridor. His country dacha, though, is spacious.

All these people have their own summer cottages—again fairly modest—and their own cars, occasionally chauffeur-driven. The relationships between maids, chauffeurs and their employers is less formal than with us: the employer is not Mr. Smith, but Boris Gregorevich. The word "comrades," with all its revolu-

tionary connotations, I heard used only in the most impersonal sense, and then as the equivalent of "you-all." A young, blond, very Western mother, urging her two teen-age daughters to get ready to drive out to the country for the weekend, said, "All right, comrades, hurry up!" At a rather formal dinner party given in one of the new apartments, the host rose from the highly polished table and addressed his meticulously dressed guests—an internationally known film director, his movie star wife, a concert pianist and a famous astrophysicist: "Well, comrades, shall we go into the living room?"

To me, *comrade* calls up gray visions of Union Square and 1930ish demonstrations of the unemployed. In Moscow, I kept having the feeling that it has become a different word.

WHATEVER value the Soviet citizen gets for his money by American standards, his rent is trivial—perhaps only 4 or 5 per cent of his income. Vacations are either free or cost so little even at the most expensive and exclusive resorts that an American is bewildered.

I spent several days at Uskoya, a former summer palace which is now a retreat for members of the Academy of Science. The forty-room, eighteenth-century house is set among acres and acres of parks, woods and ponds. The building itself seems unchanged since the days when figures out of Chekhov wandered, in beards and pince-nez, along the heavily carpeted corridors and galleries. Today the atmosphere is a combination of scholarly decorum and shirt-sleeved relaxation. The guests with whom I played billiards, went swimming and took long, grave walks, were chemists, physicists, biologists, surgeons and historians. Because of the imminence of the U-2 trial, conversation was determinedly non-political on both sides. The total cost for a large room and three meals was slightly under $6 a day, yet the guests were among the highest paid in the country. Their cultural equivalents here are the most outstanding members of the Harvard, Berkeley and Cal Tech faculties; their social equivalents, again, would be the top industrialists.

IT MUST be pointed out that such a place is for those men who do not as yet have their own private country places. Depending on the community, these dachas are either privately owned or placed at the lifelong disposal of the recipient by the state through his professional organization. I went to Lutsino, some forty miles from Moscow, where in a beautiful countryside I saw the oldest Academy of Science dacha community—about forty very comfortable houses with lawns, garages, a community tennis court, set apart from the surroundings by a tall wooden fence and a grove of trees. By American standards, the houses were modestly middle class. By Soviet standards, they were luxurious.

They are for the most eminent senior members of the Academy. Strolling about with my host, I was introduced to people who have traveled and know the West, and are typical, cultured European intellectuals. The children I saw playing around on the lawns had that indefinable upper-class appearance, poise and attitude of their opposite numbers in Greenwich, Connecticut. Tennis manners on the rather carelessly maintained courts are the same as

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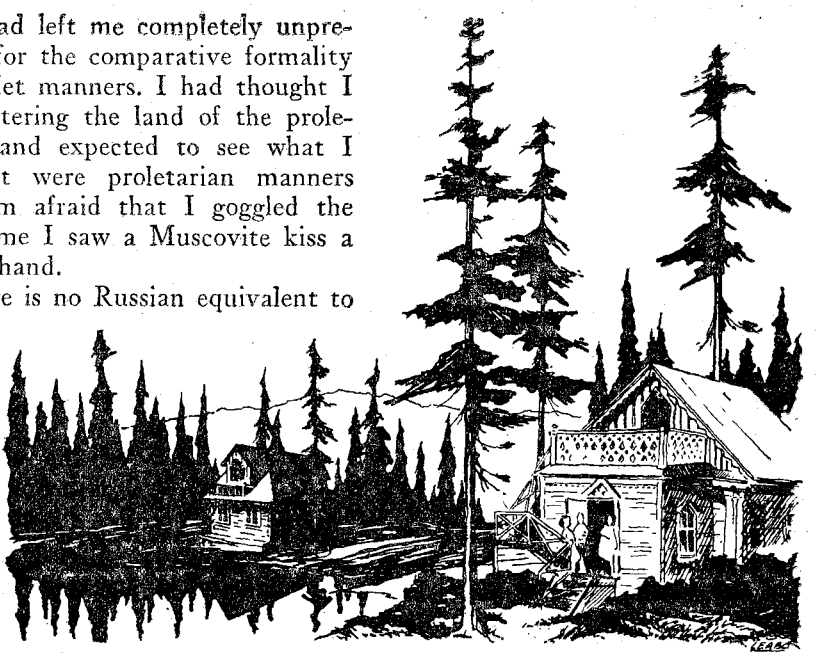
ours. The dogs that lope, sniff and pad along the well-paved roads are thoroughbred setters, cockers, shepherds and Scotties, many of them blue-ribbon winners at the annual Moscow Dog Show. As at Uskoya, the community is outwardly staid and conservative, and inwardly strained by the social rivalries that plague any ingrown wealthy summer colony anywhere in the world.

I HAVE been many times to Peredelkino, now world famous as the home of Boris Pasternak. It is the writers' equivalent of Lutsino and is under the jurisdiction of the Union of Soviet Writers. Peredelkino was an artistic community before the Revolution, and the Bolsheviks simply took it over and carried on the tradition. From a distance, the gabled houses look almost American, but then one sees the traditional vertical boarding, or the elaborate carving that is so Russian. The houses I visited varied widely, in atmosphere and furnishings: one which I knew well had light, delicate Swedish modern furniture; another was the same as it must have been in 1905. Peredelkino lawns are generally hedge-enclosed patches of woodland and wildflowers, because Russians take a romantic view of country life. To them a well-manicured lawn—called an English lawn—is a little laughable.

I remember driving one hot day along a road; off to the left, across a beautiful meadow, was the balled tower of a church built by Ivan the Terrible. It was where Pasternak is buried. To my right, I could hear the click of Soviet croquet balls and the plop-plop of badminton—bourgeois lawn games that have recently swept the community like a fever. As my car passed, a long-bearded patriarch, in traditional Russian blouse and cap, stopped swinging a scythe through the tall grass, waved and quoted some smiling lines of Nekrassov. Peredelkino is so Russian—past and present—that even on a hot, insect-humming summer day, one can sense all the conflicting pulls that make a harmony only to those who have lived through it all.

Both our own reportage and what I had seen of Soviet films before I went to the Soviet Union for the first time had left me completely unprepared for the comparative formality of Soviet manners. I had thought I was entering the land of the proletariat and expected to see what I thought were proletarian manners and I'm afraid that I goggled the first time I saw a Muscovite kiss a lady's hand.



There is no Russian equivalent to the American cocktail party; there is only the far more formal reception, where the guests conduct themselves with great reserve by American standards. The American's habit of leaning against the nearest thing solid enough to support even part of his weight is shocking to the Russian. During my first visit to Moscow, I was invited to a very big reception at the Kremlin. Three great rooms, each with an orchestra, were filled with light, food, liquor, foreign diplomats, members of the Supreme Soviet, and more Honored Artists than even M.C.A. could corral. I met an Honored Artist lady who turned out to be a popular gamine comedienne. She knew absolutely no English, and I at that time knew no Russian. Between us, we had my ten cents worth of French. One way or another we were making great conversation, and as I relaxed more and more in her presence, I relaxed more and more in my position, and finally I made myself comfortable by leaning against a table while I held my drink. It didn't dawn on me that I was embarrassing her acutely until finally, in pure pantomine, she asked me: "Would you put your foot on a table where there was food?"

I shook my head in astonishment.

"Then why," she went on—and I swear that this was all acted out so deftly that there wasn't a moment's doubt of her meaning—"why put your behind on it?"

What eventually dawned on me was that Soviet formality among the richer and more intellectual classes was simply the European formality of an earlier part of the century. Millions of aristocrats and wealthy members of the middle class may have emigrated during and after the Revolution, but many more millions remained behind. After decades of vicissitudes, they and their children have re-emerged now that their background is no longer held against them. Today they can be found in the arts, sciences and humanities. It is very possible that their manner has persisted and sets the standard.

Of course, there are also the Soviet snobs who can be almost suffocating in their disdain for the slightest breech of behavior by anyone, Russian or foreign. One with whom I made a short journey through a poor section of the country said, as we entered the only restaurant in a dilapidated town: "I'd rather starve than eat with pigs. Let's get out of here." Yet there is nothing anti-Soviet about him. He had traveled abroad extensively, studied a year in a famous Western European university, and returned to Moscow, at no time anything but a convinced Communist.

Charles de Gaulle has been quoted as saying that the Russians must be brought back to Europe. Someone should tell the General that that's precisely where they have been for the past forty years—with their manners unchanged.

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Protecting Overseas Investors . . . *William Appleman Williams*

ANY PROGRAM for helping underdeveloped countries rests in part upon its approach to the nationalization of overseas American property holdings. Yet in all their theory and rhetoric on foreign aid, the spokesmen of the Kennedy Administration have been noticeably silent or negative on that question. Implicitly, of course, their attitude is to oppose nationalization in the short run while working to prevent it in the long run.

While understandable, that approach is impractical and unfortunate for three reasons. First, nationalization is going to occur again and again in the next decade. It is a part of reality that cannot be wished away or dodged. Second, nationalization when once undertaken cannot be stopped without recourse to economic or physical force. And even if those measures are effective in the narrow and immediate sense, the resulting victory only compounds the fundamental problems which produce nationalization in the first place. This is because, thirdly and most important of all, *the underdeveloped and developing countries desperately need the economic and psychological capital provided by nationalization.*

While the direct economic benefits of nationalization are obvious, it is essential to realize that the poor countries also view it as a way to obtain a continuing source of capital for the diversification of their economies. Though we tend to forget it, the leaders of the developing countries suffer every day with the reality that their systems are economically *malformed* as well as economically *retarded.* And since American investments have often sustained or accentuated that bias, the poor countries consider nationalization as eminently justified — especially when Washington keeps telling them to sacrifice for balance and diversification. Perhaps President Kennedy should do more homework on an ancient human proverb: He who demands sacrifice also has to make it. As his first offering, the President might give up his apparent assumption that the American corporation is a deputy marshal on the New Frontier.

If he did that, the President might help all Americans to gain a clear insight into the psychological drive for nationalization. Even under the best (and so far, literally ideal) circumstances, economic development is a tough, grinding, demanding process. It simply cannot be done with diffidence, decorum and delicacy. A strong majority within the society must evoke by their ideals, policies and personal deportment a deep and abiding sense of commitment. Otherwise the men and women will wear out before the machines are broken in, and the children will slip from iron diapers into old age before they are fifteen. Central to this commitment is a sense of *ours* that overrides the elementary concern with *mine,* and nationalization is at once a symbol and an act of the crucial attitude of *ours* that creates, strengthens and sustains the spirit and reality of community that is so necessary for true development.

IF THE United States does in fact want the sustained and equitable development of backward societies, then it has to come to terms with these economic and psychological drives toward nationalization. One way to acomplish this would involve a *volte face* in the underlying American attitude toward nationalization. Yet three powerful factors, two of them wholly pragmatic, incline against such a switch at the present time. One is the intensity of the existing attitude toward nationalization, and its interlocking associations with the almost completely negative image of the Soviet Union. The second is the extent to which access to mass-communications media is controlled by men who accept and vigorously merchandise that unfavorable stereotype. The third and most important reason involves the fundamental moral issue of using such mass media and its techniques (even granted access) to manipulate public thinking and attitudes. Here the decision must be negative as a matter of principle, whatever the desirability of the new attitude itself. Hence there remains but one approach to the problem that is both feasible and admissible.

This alternative hinges on working out ways and means of routinely compensating Americans whose property is nationalized so that both sides will benefit over the long run as well as derive satisfaction in the short run. As approaches which lead to that kind of equity, the following suggestions seem worthy of serious consideration. They are not the only ways of handling the issue, but they do focus on the central difficulties, and they are capable of being implemented either singly or in various combinations.

¶Following a candid and probing discussion, a program would be instituted under which government securities would be issued to underwrite prompt remuneration to the American property owners. This would be United States paper drawing no interest beyond that necessary to cover service costs. The amount of compensation might well be determined by the decision of a board of review including representatives of the foreign government, the U.S. State and Commerce departments, the American property owners and a random selection of American taxpayers drawn from the blue- and white-collar groups.

Though most laymen are probably not aware of it, the central feature of this proposal—prompt compensation by the American taxpayer—is a more forthright and equitable version of the insurance now provided in many circumstances by the United States Government for American investors against future nationalization. But the American taxpayer should not have to foot the bill all by himself. As part of his contribution to less fortunate peoples, it seems fair to ask him to finance

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WILLIAM APPLEMAN WILLIAMS teaches history at the University of Wisconsin. His latest book, The Contours of American History, *is reviewed on page 102 of this issue.*

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the initial shock payment; and since he has been in one way and another contributing in the form of tax-financed subsidies to the welfare of the large American corporation for more than half a century, that part of the plan would be nothing new. If anything, it would be much healthier to do it in this more open and direct manner. In any event, this kind of subsidy is far more defensible than the expense-account financing that has been going on for the past generation.

But having assumed the initial burden, the American taxpayer can and should ask the citizens of the developing country to replace him at the payment window over the longer haul. Hence, under this plan, the securities initially issued by the United States would be retired by the government of the developing society over a period proportionate to the amount, but it would in any case have at least ten years to complete payment. This solution has three advantages: it involves all parties in open, candid negotiations and relationships; it gives the American citizen a significant sense of participation in helping other countries; and it links the United States with revolutionary change in a positive, creative and friendly way.

¶The United States could take the lead in having the United Nations establish and administer a fund for nationalization, perhaps as an adjunct of SUNFED, in accordance with the same general principles as outlined in the proposal above. The initial capital could be raised through a special assessment against member nations (it would be incidentally interesting to see how the Soviet Union and other Communist countries would vote on that provision), and the fund then operated with a view to having it become a self-supporting enterprise.

¶The United States Government and American corporations (or the latter singly) could negotiate with the nationalizing government a contractual treaty whereby the foreign government would take over the American property and repay the firm over a negotiated or arbitrated period of time out of current operating profits. This procedure would ask a greater immediate concession by the corporation on two grounds: that it had benefited to a disproportionate degree in the past, and that the American taxpayer was already carrying his fair share of financing corporation welfare and the development of backward countries. Corporation representatives might be allowed to sit on the new board of the nationalized enterprise in a wholly advisory capacity until repayment had been completed, but that should in the final instance be a decision left to the foreign government.

¶Nationalization without any direct monetary compensation in either of two principal forms:

(A) In a straight contractual deal between the American corporation and the foreign government, a licensing agreement would allow the company to continue some or all of its business on a royalty basis. Thus an oil company might be permitted to handle one phase of retail marketing, or chemical derivatives; or a manufacturing concern would draw such royalty payments on each unit sold by the nationalized concern. Here the principle would be that of guaranteeing the corporation a reasonable long-term return on the grounds that its initial investment had contributed to the welfare of the backward country.

(B) In the case of raw materials or agricultural products (categories which include many American property holdings in underdeveloped countries), a treaty between governments could guarantee the sustained delivery at stabilized prices to the United States of the product in question. This would insure that the American corporation could continue its basic operations, would meet the needs of the United States economy, and would provide the developing country with a market that it could count upon to help underwrite future operations (including diversification as well as expansion and product research in the specific area).

This proposal could further be combined with a plan to provide prompt cash payment, or it could be integrated into regional or U.N. stabilization and development programs. For that matter, a hasty and rather crude plan for such a Western Hemispheric sugar pool was advanced as a way to float and redeem bonds for the purpose of compensating American entrepreneurs and firms that were nationalized in Cuba. (It was brushed aside by the United States.) In a more sophisticated and carefully prepared version it might well provide a way to reopen pacific and less frenetic relations with Cuba; and if successful in that instance, might easily be extended to other raw materials and property holdings throughout the hemisphere.

SUCH A recovery from the moral and pragmatic debacle of the American-sponsored invasion of Cuba would probably do as much—if not more—for the psychological well-being of the United States as it would for the peace of mind of the Cubans, and for the further diversification and development of their political economy. It would of course provide the Cubans with a significant economic assist, and additionally give them a nice card to play in their dealings with Russia and China.

Those considerations would be all to the good, both in themselves and as illustrations to the rest of the world that the United States could learn from its mistakes. But hopefully, the approach would do even more to restore the confidence of Americans in their own ability to adapt their revolutionary heritage to the circumstances of the mid-twentieth century. And that in turn might help them stop talking about New Frontiers long enough to begin civilizing the old ones.

Letters

(*Continued from inside cover.*)

where the climate in the student community is even conservative, it was the *Courier,* organ of the Catholic Diocese, which scored *Abolition* for having "distortions so blatant and so extreme as to produce the net effect of a lie." Other Catholic publications have warned of both the film and the Birch Society and their gullible reception by some Catholics.

RUSSELL W. GIBBONS
Chairman, Publications Committee
American Freedoms Council
Hamburg, N.Y.

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In Search of America

THE CONTOURS OF AMERICAN HISTORY. By William Appleman Williams. World Publishing Co. 513 pp. $7.50.

Loren Baritz

EMERSON put it well: "They who make up the final verdict upon every book are not the partial and noisy readers of the hour when it appears; but as a court of angels, a public not to be bribed, not to be entreated, and not to be overawed, decides upon every man's title to fame." For fear that the angels may be asleep at the harp, may already have decided that this generation has lost the knack of putting words together in a sensible way, I warn them to pay attention to their job. I have the happy task of notifying them about a very good book indeed, one that should guarantee its author's fair title to fame.

Professor William Appleman Williams says that *The Contours of American History* "is the product of the somewhat archaic notion that a man writes his own books." The result of that notion is a book that feels as if it were written with clenched fists; it is quietly reasoned, beautifully ordered and spirited as hell. It should serve as an antidote to the "sure we've made mistakes but fewer than anyone else" type of American history. It will therefore make some hot wind blow hard, and Williams should prepare his storm cellar. He can take solace in the fact that he has provided America with an opportunity to learn more about itself than it now knows.

One of the most difficult and significant decisions a historian must make is how to subdivide that portion of the past with which he is concerned. His understanding of what period of time constitutes a more or less continuous phase is a result of his total knowledge and of his point of view. *The Contours of American History* is organized around three periods: the age of mercantilism, 1740-1828; the age of *laissez nous faire*, 1819-1896; and the age of corporation capitalism, 1882-1960s. The heart of the book lies in the transitions from one phase into the next, as well as in a running and quite original commentary showing how theology, religion and literature responded to and reflected the changing political economy.

Williams' presentation of the first phase is the clue to all else. One of his controlling assumptions is that, in any phase of the world he is here looking at, a sense of corporate responsibility is essential to social welfare. The basic dialogue that he presents is between the advocates of the community and those of the individual. Mercantilism contained the first, laissez faire the second, and corporation capitalism produced "a kind of syndicalism based on organizing, balancing, and co-ordinating different functional groups." He accepts mercantilism on its own terms, criticizes laissez faire from the point of view of a mercantilist, criticizes corporation capitalism from the point of view of a Socialist, and never abandons his commitment to the priority of social over individual welfare.

TWO ideas, coming together in England between the reigns of Elizabeth I and George III, emerged in the new context as English mercantilism. "One was the Biblical injunction to promote the general welfare and common good of God's corporate world and its creatures. The second was the growing propensity to define God's estate as the civil society in which the individual Christian resided. . . . The rise of mercantilism is the story of a struggle to retain and adapt an original Christian morality during the dynamic secularization of a religious outlook as an agrarian society was transformed into a life of commerce and industry."

Surprisingly, Williams moves from England to the colonies in 1740. He casts only a brief, though knowing, glance back to the seventeenth-century Puritans in Massachusetts. I say "surprisingly" because no other group in American history was as conscious of the corporate nature of society as these covenanting saints of the Bay. The Charter of Massachusetts Bay declared that the "Governor and Company of the Mattachusetts Bay in Newe England [is] one bodie politique and corporate in deede, fact, and name." Though the Puritans violated almost every other clause of their charter, this one spoke to them in terms they had already accepted before they left England. The idea of the legal corporation was the intellectual foundation of the Puritan ideas of state, society and church. The primary goal of what the saints were up to was the desire to create a unified community, to maintain its purity, to fight off factionalizing and contain centrifugal forces. In 1663 one John Davenport defined the business of Massachusetts Bay: "The end of all Civil Government & Administrations . . . is *the publick and common Good*. . . ." And this makes a difference. Williams shows the founding fathers with their ears cocked toward Shaftesbury and his England; but they also took heed of ideas worked out in New England, and the American sense of community was thus more indigenous than Williams suggests. Indeed, when one focuses on New England, one wonders whether the idea of a mercantilistic political economy was the determining force in creating an American commitment to the social order, or whether that force might not rather have been simply the idea of the legal corporation, the unified social body — political and ecclesiastical — that was developed and given durable direction by the Bay saints.

Corporate thinking of some kind (and Williams does make a good case for corporate mercantilism) inspired the men who planned this nation. John Jay emerges now as the schoolteacher of many of the Southerners, especially Jefferson and Monroe, lecturing them in mercantilism and public welfare, warning against free trade and political license. Madison and John Adams understood and shared this ideology. As opposed to the radicalism of the English Levellers, Madison accepted "expansion as the way to have welfare *and* the enjoyment of private property. Expansion would not only supply enough property for all, in the narrow economic sense, and a surplus of resources for national development, but these considerations would make it easier to honor the demands of the corporate ethical system. . . . But that left Madison . . . confronted by [Montesquieu's] argument that republicanism in large states — or empires — quickly degenerated into lower-class movements for communal property, or upper-class oligarchy, or personal tyranny." The feudal notion that only a small state was suited for direct government "was the very backbone of England's colonization in North

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America." And the Constitution itself, as Madison admitted, "is a document based on feudal principles." (Thus Williams rejects Louis Hartz's thesis that America had no feudal past.) By the time of the fight over ratification of the federal Constitution, Madison had worked out his answer to Montesquieu's assertion that republicanism and empire were mutually exclusive: so far from being secure only in small states, republicanism was safest in an expanding system, a large and growing empire. In his *Federalist #10*, Madison simply implied that Montesquieu had been wrong. This argument was wholeheartedly accepted by Jefferson and the others in this cast of American mercantilists.

The cast includes men who are not usually covered by the same blanket, but when Williams makes the bed, they seem not too fidgety. "The accomplishments of the three Adamses, Madison, Jefferson, Washington, Gallatin, Calhoun and Monroe comprised a truly magnificent testimony to the relevance and the quality of the mercantilist *Weltanschauung*, and to the spirit and energy of the Americans who transformed it into institutions and an established political economy. . . . [But] unwilling in the final showdown to make a fuller commitment to social property in the name of a corporate commonwealth, they had no effective defense against the men who demanded that private property and interest be given full scope and unrestrained liberty in the name of individualism." The American mercantilists created a nation that was built on a vision of one body politic, a unified "We the people." That this view was dominant for only some forty years signifies less about the quality of their thought than it does about the forces of change then loose in the world.

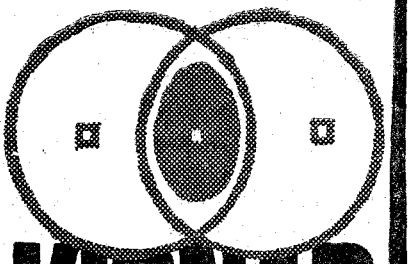
FROM Jackson to McKinley, American history, as defined by Williams, was dedicated to the proposition that all men are created separate, that each has an inalienable right to a fast buck, that governments are instituted among men to guarantee a free or at least an expanding market. By redefining the terms of the mercantilist world view, the advocates of laissez faire were less well prepared to deal with the realities of their time and place. The laissez fairists "were less free than the mercantilists, who could deal with a basic question like the need and usefulness of a national bank by concentrating on controlling its power, and who could approach slavery as an institutional problem of the political economy rather than as a personalized sin." Similarly, the mercantilists understood the Indian as a member of a tribe and formulated the American response to the Indian problem in social terms; the proponents of laissez faire, however, decided to destroy tribal society and culture by forcing the Indian "to accept the institution of private property and ultimately enter the market place as an individual entrepreneur."

The commitment to Manifest Destiny, to national expansion, is also placed — and usefully so — in the context of laissez faire. How often Americans of this phase announced the absolute necessity of acquiring markets outside of the home market in order to liquidate surplus produce and products. The continental frontier worked in several ways: it constituted a safety valve, an escape hatch through which dissident Americans could run; it was a market for surplus production; it was the excuse for Americans to refuse to face themselves and their nation. "By creating a mirage of an infinity of second chances, the frontier almost institutionalized everyman's propensity to evade his fundamental problems and responsibilities. Yet in providing wealth and personal satisfaction for many, the frontier also worked its magic on easterners who never ventured west of Baltimore or Charleston — or Concord."

WHY that "—or Concord"? Williams rejects the radical individualism of the Concord transcendentalists. But in dumping Thoreau into that world of Emersonian cream puffs, a disservice has been done. The three sentences about Thoreau in *The Contours of American History* cannot make clear that here was the anti-Yankee of the first order. In his rejection of capitalism and the herd instinct of his supposedly individualistic neighbors, Thoreau personified the kind of morality that Williams elsewhere commends (as in the case of the Rev. Martin Luther King). The anti-capitalistic individualism of both Thoreau and John Taylor of Caroline (who is also mistreated as a too-simple individualist) cannot be viewed as contributions to the age of laissez faire. They were both nay-sayers, and would have said nay to each other. Williams is not convincing when he deals with these (and Herman Melville) individualistic opponents of laissez-faire individualism.

"Since the divergence of opinion ultimately defined *the* question, the basic cause of the Civil War was the *Weltanschauung* of laissez faire. Unwilling to compete within the framework and under the terms of the [mercantilistic] Constitution, northern antislavery ad-

Once again, all America is talking about the crime of the century



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vocates of laissez faire finally undertook to change the rules in the middle of the game — and in the middle of the continent — by denying the south further access to the expanding market place." Laissez faire, as Williams explains the North's definition of it, meant Northern expansion and a Southern ghetto. Sectional competition for land was aggravated by a shared ideology: laissez faire and expansion. Northern advocates of individualism decided who was to get what.

Winning the war, the North did not know what to do with itself. The ideology of laissez faire was subversive of itself, as it gave rise to that kind of industrialization that destroyed laissez faire. The South lost the war, and corporation capitalism won.

AND so, period three. What the American mercantilists (along with Thoreau and Taylor of Caroline) had feared most had now come about. After 1896 the corporation "crossed every economic, political, and social boundary, affected every branch of government, and permeated every aspect of the individual citizen's life." The New Deal, as others have also observed, made America safe for capitalism. But the persistent acceptance of the "frontier-expansionist outlook" could not make America safe in the world. "Given the basic axiom that the frontier was the source of wealth and welfare, it was but a step to the conclusion that overseas economic expansion provided the frontier to replace the continental west. But the frontier of overseas economic expansion involved established societies. . . . Hence holding the frontier responsible for American development meant placing the responsibility on other people."

The question remains. It was always there. Where do we go from here? Williams allows three alternatives: an anachronistic corporate oligarchy that can end only by playing Russian roulette with Russia; the creation of an industrial gentry which would rule, in the best tradition of *noblesse oblige*, in the interest of the whole society; or the creation of "the first truly democratic socialism in the world." Unless Americans would take this third path, "they would ultimately fall victims of a nostalgia for their childhood."

The Contours of American History is not a book for children, nostalgic or otherwise. Everyone associated with its appearance ought to be congratulated; I ought to be congratulated for bringing it to your attention; you will congratulate yourself when you decide to face the logic of American history that Williams presents. His logic is of that rare kind where the conclusions follow from the premises. I hope that his conclusions will make a very wide circle of Americans thoroughly unhappy as a result of the insecurity that is sure to follow from a loss of favored clichés.

'An Indifferent Letter Writer'

LETTERS OF FYODOR MICHAILOVITCH DOSTOEVSKY TO HIS FAMILY AND FRIENDS. Translated by Ethel Colburn Mayne, with an introduction by Avrahm Yarmolinsky. Horizon Press. 344 pp. $6.

Sidney Monas

DOSTOEVSKY, on his own repeated admission, was "an indifferent letter writer." Unlike Tolstoy, who never wrote a dull line of prose in his life, Dostoevsky rarely brought his full creative intelligence to bear on anything except his novels. For him, everything else was a distraction. Life heaped distraction upon him. He plowed his way through calamities of circumstance that would have crushed ten lesser men, and he survived the equally monumental hazards of success. Like Tolstoy, in his old age, he wore a prophet's mantle; but unlike Tolstoy, he rarely concentrated his most intense energies on this public role. At the very end of his life, it is true, in his Pushkin memorial address, he caught fire; and there are flickers of inspiration in *The Diary of a Writer* and in his letters.

On the whole, however, Dostoevsky's utterances outside his fiction sound almost deliberately flat and mediocre; neither insincere nor unintelligent, but made as though to be gotten over and done with and on to something else. And the "something else" is always a novel, whether the novels he actually wrote and was never satisfied with, or that great "ideal" novel (of which he regarded the others as merely by-products), he planned and never finished, "The Life of a Great Sinner."

For someone who so disliked writing

SIDNEY MONAS is the author of Third Section: Police and Society in Russia under Nicholas I *(Harvard University Press). He is now completing a book on the image of the family in Russian literature from Pushkin to Pasternak.*

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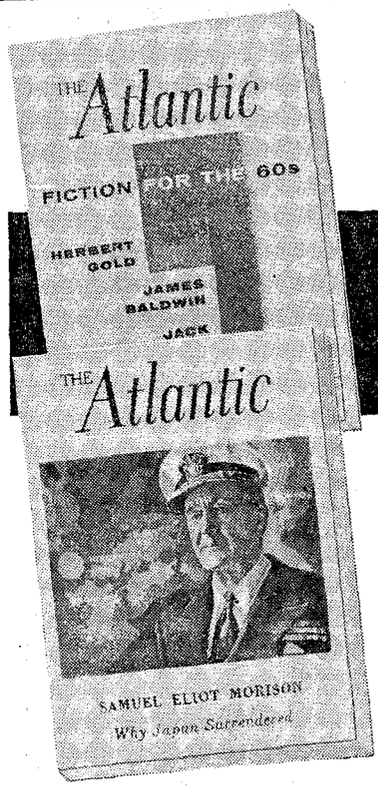
letters, Dostoevsky wrote an uncommon lot of them. A recent Russian edition, by no means complete, comes to four volumes. Most of them—even the letters to his family and closest friends—are concerned with money matters and apologies for not writing more intimately and at greater length. A few, written towards the end of his life, reflect his role as sage and pundit, and in these one is sometimes surprised to find the creator of Raskolnikov and Alyosha Karamazov giving the most bourgeois of counsels, preaching the wisdom of moderation. One finds him recommending reading matter for the adolescent daughter of a relative, dwelling on the educational virtues of Sir Walter Scott, Dickens and Cervantes, but conceding to the Philistinism of his correspondent that his own works had best be kept from her.

In earlier letters, those written from his "second exile" in a Europe he despised, hounded by creditors, harassed by publishers, struggling with disease and depression, he expresses his envy for the leisured gentlemen of literature—for Turgenev, Goncharov and Tolstoy—who can write (or so he thinks) free of the infernal pressures that plague him. And yet the most drastic kind of pressure is exactly what he seems to need. In his writing, as in his gambling, Dostoevsky has to feel that everything is at stake—not merely his reputation or his self-esteem, but his life, his future and the lives of his loved ones. "In short," he writes of *The Idiot* to his friend, the poet Maikov, "I must take this book by storm, fling myself on it head foremost, and stake all on the hazard of the die, come what may!" The gambling metaphor is careless, but by no means accidental.

AS MUCH AS he admired the work of his great contemporaries (and his personal quarrels with them rarely clouded his critical insight), Dostoevsky felt that the "literature of the landowners"—those prolonged poems elevating and elaborating on the ordinary and the seemingly humdrum—had had its day. He too said he was a realist, but realism meant something different to him: a plunge into the extraordinary and the fantastic which alone, he felt, could truly illuminate the ordinary. Like Freud, he saw neurosis as a commentary on, an elucidation of, the normal. His novels begin where most end, and they proceed from cataclysm to cataclysm, like his life, like the newspaper crimes he was so fascinated by. ("In any newspaper one takes up, one comes across reports of wholly authentic facts, which nevertheless strike one as extraordinary.")

In his letters, however, Dostoevsky belonged mostly to the prudent world of the everyday, the world of common sense in which commitments are less than absolute. Perhaps that is why he is so impatient, so insistent that communication is not to be achieved in this way. We find him surprisingly shrewd, sometimes banal, never lacking when it suits him a hard sense of the practical. He was capable of being a good businessman, a wise father, an intelligent political observer, even a man of the world.

But the letters, too, have their surprises. This statement, for example, from an unusually intimate letter written in Siberia: "If anyone could prove to me that Christ is outside the truth, and if the truth really did exclude Christ, I should prefer to stay with Christ and not with the truth." It is startling enough in itself, but if one adds the knowledge of hindsight, bearing in mind that it is repeated verbatim many years later by the villain of *The Possessed*, the "hollow man" Stavrogin, what is one to make of it? And Dostoevsky's passionate populism, his conviction that the upper reaches of Russian society were crumbling in decay and that salvation lay only with the peo-



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ple — how much closer than is commonly assumed it brings him to the radicals and "nihilists" he both admired and despised. We find him absolutely fascinated by the figure of Alexander Herzen, the *émigré* inspirer of Russian socialism, later to serve in part as a model for Ivan Karamazov. ". . . He ever and always was first of all a *writer*." To this, Dostoevsky attributes what he considers to be Herzen's vanity and levity; but also the inevitability of his "return to the people," his belief in Russia and his disillusionment with the West. Surely this Dostoevsky — who found himself just on the edge of being convinced by the arguments of his own Raskolnikov and Grand Inquisitor — made a strange bedfellow for the reactionaries who professed to admire him.

It is a pity that so little editorial care has gone into this reissue of a selection of Dostoevsky's letters in English translation. It is not a new edition. The translation, made around 1912, is based largely on German and French translations rather than on the Russian original. The transliteration of names is archaic and confusing. The notes are most inadequate. The editing of individual letters betrays a certain archaic snobbery about money matters and domestic detail. In 1912, Dostoevsky's widow and heirs still had a right to suppress his letters to his mistress, the demonic Polina Suslova, and her sister; surely, there is no reason to exclude them now. A new Russian edition presents us with many more letters to choose from; these have not been used. The book contains, also, a section of contemporary reminiscences, but here again the problematic diary of Polina Suslova and other materials collected by Dolinin and published in Russian as long ago as 1924 have not been used. The only new thing in the book is a brief, lucid, competent, urbane, if somewhat uninspired introduction by Avrahm Yarmolinsky. Dostoevsky deserves better.

Window on the New Hungary

THE NEW HUNGARIAN QUARTERLY. (Corvina Press, Budapest). Vol. I, No. 1, Sept., 1960; Vol. II, No. 1, Jan., 1961.

George A. Lanyi

THE PREWAR *Hungarian Quarterly*, published in Budapest, was semi-official in character, dignified and moderately conservative in tone. It served Hungarian foreign policy, explaining to the West why Hungary wanted its frontiers revised and trying to counteract the Little Entente propaganda that characterized Hungary as semi-barbarian and anti-democratic. Behind the official façade, a small staff of Western-minded intellectuals attempted a dialogue with the West, tenaciously, sometimes patheticall-y, presenting Hungary as a part of Europe whose artists, scholars, poets and novelists deserved Western recognition. Its managing editor became a victim of Nazi terror in 1944. Iván Boldizsár, editor of *The New Hungarian Quarterly*, pays tribute to his predecessor.

The New Hungarian Quarterly, now available in New York (Stechert-Hafner, Inc., 31 East 10 Street; $2.40 a year), contains parallels with the prewar publication. Again, one finds the obvious political justification, but outright totalitarian direction now replaces benevolent authoritarian support. The social, economic and cultural situation of the new "Socialist" Hungary is presented in articles of varying merit, but on a fairly high level. Again, the most interesting contributions are in the cultural field, though in some of these the transparent and hackneyed ideological message makes unpalatable reading. Again, one senses, particularly in writers of non-Communist background, an eager seizing of this opportunity to reopen the dialogue with the West and to demonstrate that they belong to the West rather than to the East. For our part, the magazine offers readers of English one of the few opportunities to come in contact with ideas from within the Russian sphere of influence.

The editorial board includes noted scientists, scholars, critics and other writers. Of these, Lázsló Németh and Aron Tamási have been among the literary elite for decades and were outspoken partisans of the 1956 uprising. A contributor, Gyula Illyés, probably the best living Hungarian poet, is known in Hungary and the West by his outcry, "Of Dictatorship," which deserves a place in any European anthology of Poems for Freedom. Genuine party-liners are in a minority.

For the student of the Soviet bloc, these articles, short stories, short reviews, documents and notes are richly informative. But even the general reader can learn a great deal from them.

To me, the most penetrating and most poignant piece is Illyés's "Rácegres Notebook," which first appeared in July, 1960, in the Budapest review *Kortárs* (Contemporary). Rácegres is a large, remote farm which belonged before the war to one of the great semi-feudal estates. Illyés, the son of a poor smith, was born there in 1902. In 1936, after living in many parts of Europe, including Paris and Moscow, he revisited it, intending to write poetry in the quiet of a country summer. But the misery and apathy of the people moved him to write his best-known prose work, *Puszták Népe* (People of the Puszta) striking the conscience of the complacent urban middle class with the image of "three million beggars." Now in his "Notebook" Illyés describes the life of the farm after the 1945-47 reformist ferment and thirteen years of Communist rule. The long, drab buildings crowded with farm-hands and their families have given way to "suburban villas . . . to a sort of platonic village." Illyés comments that he and his friends "did not want to lead the three million beggars . . . to the Eden of the 'complete bedroom,' the petit-bourgeois way of life." There is still no plumbing, no electricity, no telephone, not even "a pub." "The next village, some seven miles away, can be reached only by a primitive dirt road from the medieval Arpád era." But the writer today seems to have no function. "I shall not exert my pen," for all these will be provided some day "without interference by the writer." The people of the *puszta* still expect great things from him, but the poet finds it hard to rebuild himself from "a past broken down into its elements."

THERE are attempts at a literary dialogue with England and France (not with America). István Vas, T. S. Eliot's translator, was one of a small group of writers who paid a short officially sponsored visit to England last summer. In his travel notes, he calls Eliot "the greatest present-day poet of the Western world," clearly meaning by this more than merely west of the iron curtain. His concluding sentence expresses, in the words of the old Sienese motto, an enthusiasm for England apparently untainted by political reservations: "England has greatly expanded my heart." From another article we learn that a

GEORGE A. LANYI, born and educated in Hungary, was graduated from the London School of Economics in 1937 and then worked for two years on Budapest newspapers. In 1938 he came to Harvard, where he received a Ph.D.; during the war he was with the OWI. Mr. Lanyi has taught at Harvard and Brown, is at present a member of the Department of Government at Oberlin College.

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"Journal of World Literature," published today in Hungary under the title, *Nagyvilág* (Wide World), contains in translation the work of an astonishing array of modern Western writers, and almost completely neglects Soviet literature. A party-line article on a Budapest workers' club shows that, of 183 volumes charged out on a "typical day," only seven were "Soviet literature." Forty were "Foreign classics"; forty-two, "Hungarian classics"; thirty-five, "Hungarian modern"; thirty-six, "Other [presumably Western] fiction."

One of the most indigenous revolutionary spirits, the peasant writer and politician Péter Veres, comparatively silent since 1956, reviews an anthology, *Modern English Short Stories*, ranging from D. H. Lawrence and James Joyce to Graham Greene and Dylan Thomas. Veres finds that modern English writing is dominated by "existentialist nihilism." He admits that the "nihilists" are right in many things, but he suddenly reminds us that, after all, even "petty politicians" and "hypocritical priests" tried to "instill some kind of order, moral responsibility, good taste, and decent behavior into the masses. . . ." He prefers "rational action" and "active wisdom" to negative criticism, but does not explain what he means.

"Style" is a serious concern. Oscillating between truism and abstract nonsense, the party-liner László Bóka earnestly advances the dubious thesis that, whereas Hungarian literature and art "had no real problems of style in the past" because their small clientele could easily understand them, today's writers find difficulty in achieving a "democratism of style." He preaches a somewhat liberally interpreted "socialist realism"; this cannot be secured by "administrative measures." The far more sophisticated József Czimer, dramatic director of a leading Budapest theatre, while adroitly protecting himself from accusations of siding with "Western formalism," defends those who search for new forms of expression: "No one may be called upon or have the power to fix styles *a priori*, whether old or new."

Like other reviews dependent on the skill of translators, *The New Hungarian Quarterly* is of uneven fluency. Aron Tamási's short story, though rooted in Transylvanian folklore and originally written partly in dialect, comes through with astonishing freshness. Unfortunately, Attila József, who is regarded in most of Europe as one of the outstanding poets of the century and has been translated by Eluard, Aragon and Cocteau, has not been rendered adequately in English; therefore an article on his work gives examples in French and German translation.

Each issue contains a lavishly illustrated article on a Hungarian artist (the post-impressionist Béni Ferenczy and the expressionist master of prewar "proletarian" art, Gyula Derkovits); scholarly articles on Bartók and Haydn are of high merit.

Harlem in London

LONDON'S NEWCOMERS. The West Indian Migrants. By Ruth Glass. Harvard University Press. 278 pp. $4.

C. H. Rolph

"WELL, we have our way of life, and they have theirs, don't we?" (it's a London landlady speaking); "but how dark is he? I mean some are jet black and some are more coffee-colored. But if he's very dark we couldn't consider it."

This woman seems fairly honest by comparison with the many who say, with their heads only just peeping round the door, "The neighbors wouldn't like it": some West Indian newcomers to Britain have come to regard it as a country controlled by anonymous and mythical "neighbors." In this consistently readable study of the West Indian contribution to London's "color problem," Mrs. Ruth Glass and her research assistant Harold Pollins, working from the Center for Urban Studies at University College, London, have set up the very first truly objective picture of a phenomenon that is very difficult to piece together. It's a rather less disquieting picture than you could construct from what has been said in the past five years in press and Parliament, but still a picture to be ashamed of. Collectively, we Britons emerge as a half-hearted and hypocritical lot, hoping all the time that "toleration" will be counted a national virtue even when its real name should be apathy or cowardice, and even if it could be more generously called shyness.

The hard facts, the mere statistics, will be unimpressive in American eyes. The colored residents in the whole of Britain now number less than 250,000, including Africans, Indians and Pakistanis, as well as West Indians. This is a half per cent of the population. White immigrants outnumber them by three to one. "In the whole of London," says Mrs. Glass, "there are only two streets—in Brixton—which are almost entirely occupied by colored immigrants." Thirty years ago Brixton was cruelly reputed to house only pianos, prostitutes, policemen, pimps and a prison; but you seldom saw a colored man there. It is now a Harlemish area, described in this book with merciless accuracy—hardly any other writer, for example, has mentioned the squalid effect achieved by breaking off all the front porch railings (to get scrap metal during the war) and leaving the stumps in the stonework ever since. The railings will never go back because the buildings are doomed and no one is interested in them—except the West Indians.

Brixton has the West Indians because it let them inhabit its disused

C. H. ROLPH, a regular contributor to the New Statesman *and former Chief Inspector of the City of London police, is the author of* Common Sense About Crime and Punishment, *to be published this fall by Macmillan.*

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deep air-raid shelter—the biggest in London—when they began arriving in numbers in 1948. Gradually they came out and found rooms. Here, as in Notting Hill and elsewhere, they live twelve and fourteen to a room, paying collective rents that no single family could ever afford; and they dare not appeal to a rent tribunal for fear that the landlord (himself often a colored man) would dispatch strong-arm men to teach them the merits of valor and discretion.

Most people in Britain qualify for the charge of hypocrisy by subscribing to "an all-pervasive ambivalence towards color," concealing it behind a parade of polite phrases and manners. And "prejudiced tendencies set off over-protective tendencies—colored people are pushed aside or treated with kid gloves, and sometimes they are pushed aside with kid gloves."

MRS. GLASS'S best and most percipient chapter concerns colored children in the schools, where there is no hint of segregation, voluntary, expedient, or otherwise. There is usually a language barrier with the Indian, Pakistani, African and Cypriot children, but with the West Indians there is not even that. And "when two Jamaican brothers, both very dark Negroes, first arrived in a London classroom, there was competition among the children who all wanted to sit next to them." Mrs. Glass was talking to a headmaster when "a teacher came in and said that a West Indian girl had just complained of being called 'Blackie' by a classmate. The headmaster was dismayed. Who was it? It was found that the culprit was another colored child." The greatest insult among the colored children is to say "you are blacker than me."

Seeing himself, under the guidance of Mrs. Glass, through West Indian eyes has astonished at least one Englishman. "Handshaking," she says (for example), "is not common in this country." Isn't it? I thought we shook hands as much as the Americans, though less than the Germans, who do it with their wives and children at breakfast. But she is right when she says that we stand up in Tube railway carriages even when there is a place to sit down (as there occasionally is), and convincing when she says that a West Indian sitting next to the seat we thus leave vacant is quite likely to feel that we don't want to sit near him. Henceforth I shall seek out seats next to West Indians, much as one lady portrayed in this book deliberately knocked a West Indian with her shopping bag so as to to able to say "I'm *very* sorry" with a friendly smile. "The West Indians can hardly believe their eyes," writes Mrs. Glass, "when they watch white women sweeping the platforms at Tube stations, or London charladies cleaning the corridors of office buildings." We have a lot to learn about each other, and some of my countrymen not only register surprise when they hear West Indians speaking English, but ask them whether it is ever cold in the jungle and how they like wearing trousers.

NECESSARILY, Mrs. Glass retells the stories of the London and Birmingham "race riots" in 1958. Then she makes the trenchant comment that the government has never published an official statement, a "white paper," about its policy on this question—if it has one. She remarks that members of Parliament were "not prepared to risk" supporting a back-bench motion in the House of Commons demanding controlled immigration; which implies (wrongly, I believe) that they would all have supported it if they had dared. It *may* be true. No one quite knows what to do or what the end is going to be. But there will never be freedom riders or a Little Rock in Britain. We have our lunatic fringe, but it is far more alien than the "newcomers."

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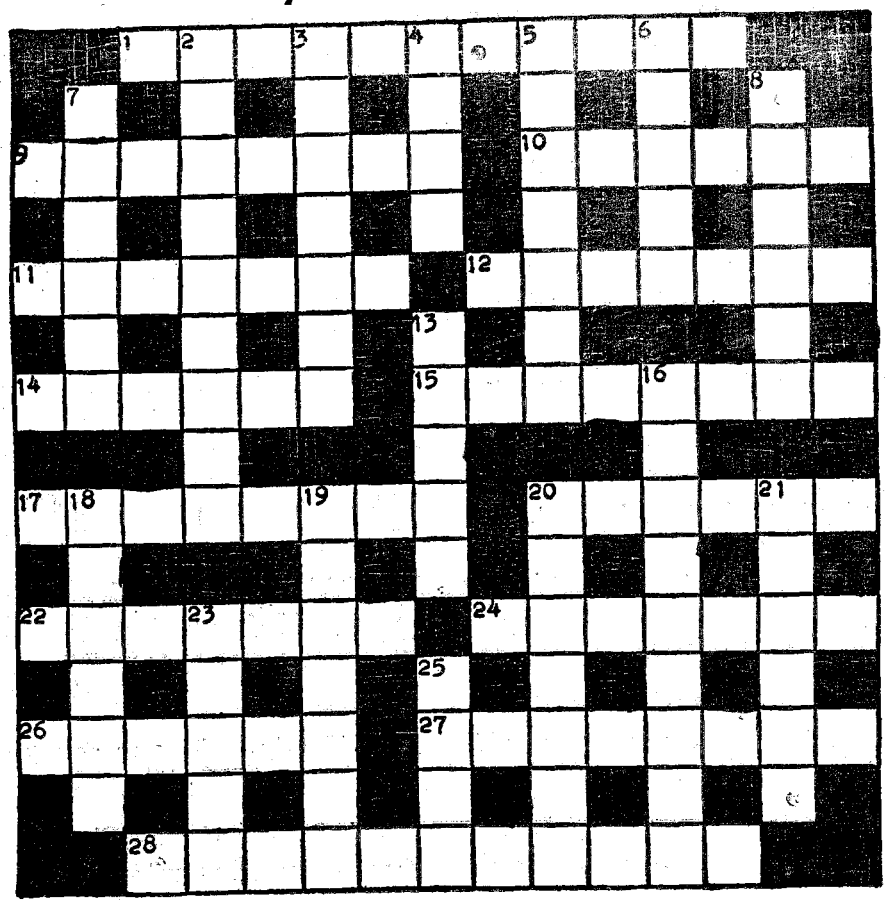
Crossword Puzzle No. 926

By FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS:

1 Somewhat like the politician Williams, we put the fool above the expert, ending up with nothing ourselves. (11)
9 If you say this, and then go down, it might prove expensive. (8)
10 One of those entitled to call a strike.
11 Not limited in specific import of brass, perhaps. (7)
12 Part of a front organization in Munster? (7)
14 Does it take a bad form of humor to help such an unsettled condition?
15 Experts on the water board deal with only superficial aspects. (8)
17 Evidently the musicians were ready for pensioning, but took care of the cut. (8)
22 A meeting place to study an important part of the welding process?
24 Is to drive to distraction in one's resting place bad? (7)
26 Close-set, without reiterated direction to shut up! (6)
27 Left in a rush, as a related definition. (8)
28 The secret seems to be that an unusual client travels around the mountains. (11)

DOWN:

2 A word of warning on reaching port, as previously mentioned. (9)
3 See 25 down
4 See 23 down
5 Does this line imply one should reduce things to a common standard?
6 The hand of the master? (5)
7 Implying masculine control is self-contained. (6)
8 Get up a poor translation of "Mare Nostrum"? (6)
13 In life there are many things to draw us so, according to Epictetus.
16 Fish bar? It might be used in the construction of one. (5, 4)
18 and 20 across Pollyanna's Utopia? (1, 5, 2, 4)
19 Excess weight of a gormandizer?
20 Bill commonly suggests a unique location. (3-4)
21 Passes judgment on the basis of only one sip? (6)
23 and 4 Implying an oily liquid improves like some wine, to keep us in the clouds. (9)
25 and 3 down Are the queen's movements relatively abbreviated as the watch ends? (4, 2, 5)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 925

ACROSS: 1, 4 and 6 Shoot the works; 9 Outward; 10 Refused; 11 Nausea; 14 Second; 15 Storied; 17 and 22 Hereford; 19 Nervous; 20 and 34 Modesty; 24 Spurned; 26 Billet; 27 Da capo; 31 Lighter; 32 Inspire; 33 Satin; 35 Night. DOWN: 1 and 26 Spoonbills; 2 Obtrude; 3 Traces; 4 Tide; 6 Wafted; 7 Restore; 8 Sided; 12 Attempt; 13 Drivers; 14 Secured; 16 Aim; 18 and 5 Endears; 21 Delight; 23 Orating; 24 Sexton; 25 Damson; 28 and 16 across Overtaxes; 29 Arcs; 30 Tidy.

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Congressman Holifield's material appears in the August issue of THE CALIFORNIAN along with supplementary facts by a former employee of AT&T. **Thomas Uzzell's** article, also in the the August issue, is extremely important because he is the former managing editor of Nation's Business and was once the personal representative in Europe of the President of Bankers Trust Co., and because he has unraveled in fairly clear terms a mystifying subject.

Joseph King's material, in the April and May issues, should be read if only to become acquainted with an organization that is becoming the national counterpart to the AMA. His articles deal with chicanery, illegal profiteering and outright racketeering in the medical, hospital and accident insurance business. Hospitals and dozens of insurance companies are named. Figures are given to show the reader the premiums paid by the various companies, and these are compared to salesmen's commissions.

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